

(CHEF LOUIS enters wielding a serving fork. ARIEL points him in the wrong direction to protect her friend but grabs his fork as he exits. GRIMSBY and PRINCE ERIC do not notice this commotion.)

PRINCE ERIC

(under his breath)

Easy, old boy, easy... She has no voice.

GRIMSBY

Oh, oh dear...

(With great skill, ARIEL starts to comb her hair with the "dinglehopper.")

PRINCE ERIC

(turning to see ARIEL)

My... isn't that unusual?

(ARIEL blushes and hands the fork to PRINCE ERIC.)

Thank you.

(ARIEL then notices the pipe in Grimsby's pocket.)

GRIMSBY

Don't tell me she's fond of pipes!

(hands ARIEL his pipe)

Can't say I blame you. That's an antique from Dusseldorf—

(ARIEL blows into the pipe as though it were a horn – right into GRIMSBY's face. CARLOTTA and PRINCE ERIC laugh.)

PRINCE ERIC

Sorry old friend, but it looks like your pipe smoked you—

GRIMSBY

Very amusing, yes. Well, she certainly knows how to make you smile.

CARLOTTA

Come along, Grimsby. Let's leave the young ones alone for a bit.

(CARLOTTA and GRIMSBY exit.)

PRINCE ERIC

You should see the princesses that Grimsby drags to dinner. So prim, so boring. But you...

(PRINCE ERIC)

(ARIEL grins. PRINCE ERIC stares at her a moment.

Then he holds his throat and asks:)

So if you don't mind my asking... what was it? An accident, when you were small?

(ARIEL turns away in shame.)

Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean— Who needs words anyway? A smile says just as much sometimes.

(ARIEL smiles again and flexes up and down on her toes. #30 ONE STEP CLOSER.)

You're nimble on your feet, aren't you? Well, dancing beats small talk any day. It's the way your legs smile... or laugh. It lets you say so many things.

One Step Closer

Flowing, easy intro Steady 4

(PRINCE ERIC:)

Danc-ing is a lang-uage that is

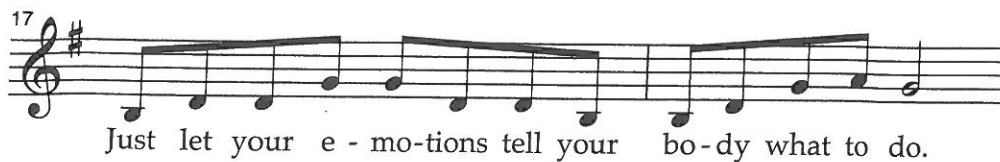
(PRINCE ERIC does a little jig.)

felt in-stead of heard. You can

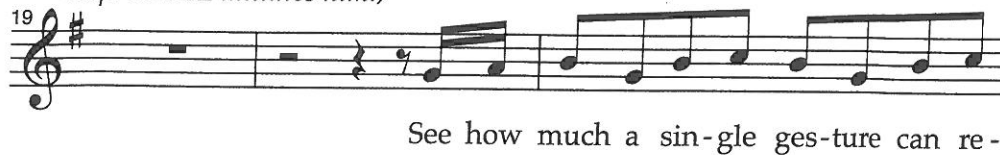
whis-per, sing or shout with-out so much as a word.

(PRINCE ERIC repeats the step. ARIEL imitates him.)

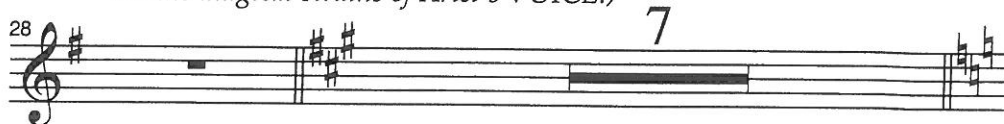
Try it, go on, like so



(PRINCE ERIC does another step. ARIEL imitates him.)



(PRINCE ERIC patiently teaches ARIEL a few more dance steps. Shes's a quick study. They become in tune with one another, moving as one, poetry in motion... Suddenly, wafting through the night breeze are the magical strains of Ariel's VOICE.)



(PRINCE ERIC stops abruptly.)

PRINCE ERIC: Did you hear something?

(ARIEL's eyes open wide but she shakes her head "no.")

PRINCE ERIC becomes distracted.)

